

Bell Valley Retreat



AT THE TOLL HOUSE

Bell Valley Weddings FAQ Guide

SALES AND BOOKING

How do I book the venue?

--In order to book the venue, you need to send a signed contract and deposit check of 50% of total cost.

Can I reserve dates without booking them?

--Once you choose a date, we send a contract for review and can place a soft hold for up to 2 weeks on your chosen date. The soft hold means that we will contact you and give you a chance to book the dates before other interested guests can book them.

How far in advance does the venue book?

--The timing of our bookings vary widely. The high season dates typically book 6-12+ months in advance.

What is the pricing?

--Our pricing varies by season and event specifics. We are happy to send our pricing sheet when requested.

Is there a minimum number of nights?

--There is a 2-night minimum stay for all of our accommodations in the high season. We are willing to work with guests on other options if we have space in our calendar.

Are there any hidden fees?

--The only fee you will not see on our price guide is an 11% hotel tax. Other fees that are add-ons are tent setup fees, tent lighting, and waste removal (if caterer does not handle this).

ACCOMMODATIONS & GUEST CAPACITY

How many guests can stay overnight?

--We currently have beds for approximately 30-35 guests in shared accommodations plus overflow camping areas for an additional 30 guests – up to 60 guests total for overnight stay. For up to 5 events each year, we can have an additional 40 guests stay in tents for a total of 100 overnight. Please review the intro guide for accommodation specifics.

What is the guest capacity for day-use?

--A total of 150 guests can utilize the property for events.

Are there other accommodations nearby for guests?

--Yes, we can send you a lodging guide with numerous accommodation recommendations within 30 minutes of our venue – including Boonville, Philo, Ukiah, and more.

What are check-in and check-out times?

--Typically, check-in is at 3pm and check-out is 11am. We can adjust these times based on other reservations prior or after your stay.

Can guests camp on the property?

--Yes. We have a handful of flat zones appropriate for tent camping with access to shared restrooms and showers. There are also options for companies to come setup glamping tents for your guests.

Can we share the costs of accommodations with our guests? Will you accept payments from numerous people?

--The event fees must be paid for by one person with one method of payment. We do not collect individual payments from guests.

Who orients the guests to their accommodations when they arrive?

--The Venue Manager will orient you and/or your event coordinator to all facilities and accommodations prior to guest arrival and will assist can guest check-in if needed. It is the client's responsibility to ensure all guests know where they are staying and to check them in.

VENUE SPECIFICS

What is the ceremony space(s)?

--We have an amphitheater of redwood benches that sits on a knoll beneath a majestic old growth-madrone and black oak tree. The amphitheater seats 150 guests.

What are the reception space(s)?

--Wedding receptions usually take place in the landscaped yard of the Toll House. There are many ways to setup the area for events. We typically have our sailcloth pole tent set up in the open field with a bar and/or dance floor beneath the giant oak tree, lit up with our string lights.

Where do the bride and groom get ready for the wedding?

--Most wedding couples stay in the Creekside Cottage, and the bride gets ready in that space. The groom utilizes the yurt near the amphitheater or other houses to get prepared.

How is cell service on the property?

--We have cell phone boosters in 3 locations on the property. In general cell phone range is spotty in this region.

Is there wifi on property?

--There is wifi in every accommodation and in the gathering spaces.

Do you have sufficient power for catering, lighting, and sound equipment?

--There is sufficient power for all event needs. For events with higher power use, we require advance details on locations and equipment placement so we can ensure there will be no surprises!

What are clean-up responsibilities for the wedding couple and guests?

--All event equipment must be neatly stacked and ready for pickup, venue equipment (tables, chairs, plateware, etc.) needs to be cleaned and returned to its original location, recycling & trash from the wedding needs to be removed from the venue, recycling & trash from other days/nights needs to be placed in the waste management shed in proper receptacles.

Is there daily housecleaning service?

--There is no daily housecleaning service. We set the spaces prior to check-in and clean after check-out.

EQUIPMENT AND RENTAL NEEDS

What equipment/furniture is included in venue rental?

--Included in the event fee is use of all accommodations (see separate accommodation details), landscaped gardens with lighting, and our event tent to fit 150 guests (see below for more info about the tent). There are tables and chairs inside and outside of each accommodation for general use. For the wedding celebration, client needs to provide all rentals including tables, chairs, tableware, dancefloor, outdoor heaters, portable restrooms for events over 50 people, etc.

What are the details for the event tent?

--We have a sailcloth pole tent, 46'x66', that can fit 150 guests plus dancefloor/bar if needed to squeeze inside due to weather (though we recommend just seating inside for a larger wedding). We charge \$550 to setup and breakdown the tent, \$200 for install of the onion lanterns and/or \$400 for install of the string lights.

Is there a catering kitchen? Where do catering companies set up?

--For events over 30 people, caterers need to setup an outdoor kitchen and bring whatever gear they need to execute your wedding menu. The chef kitchen in the Toll House can be used by your family and friends for a welcome dinner or other meals throughout the weekend, but not by the catering team.

What do wedding couples do for a dance floor?

--Rent one or dance on the grass!

Do you have tables and chairs for the reception?

--We have some outdoor tables and chairs for lounge areas on the deck and around the fire pit, but you need to rent tables and chairs for dining.

Do you have plateware, silverware, etc for the reception?

--These need to be rented. Some wedding couples use compostable plateware or palm plates for simplicity.

How many toilets do you have for guests? Do we need additional restrooms?

--There is one shared toilet in the breezeway of the Toll House for use by wedding guests. Events over 50 people need to have additional portable restrooms rented.

VENDORS

Are there any exclusive or preferred vendors?

--We have a recommended vendor list of local and regional vendors who have worked on the property. We are open to working with other professional vendors but need to provide approval in advance of their work on the property and they need to provide liability insurance.

When can vendors drop and pickup equipment? When can setup begin?

--Vendors can arrive the day before the event to drop off equipment. If there are no reservations booked on property, setup can begin the day before the event or the morning of the event if reserved. Some couples choose to reserve the day before so they can come up, get settled in, and begin setup.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Do you have any beverage restrictions?

--The only specification on beverage is that you hire a professionally licensed and insured bartending service for the wedding reception.

WEATHER

What are the best times of year for a wedding in your location?

--We love it in Bell Valley all year for different reasons. The most reliable weather with less chance of heat waves or cold/rain is in later Spring (May 1 -June 15) and Fall (September 1-October 15).

What are weather backup plans for rain, heat, etc?

--Use of our event tent plus our event space in the barn which will be ready in summer 2018.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL SPECIFICS

How far is the venue from the Bay Area?

--It takes approximately 2-3 hours from the Bay Area. 2 hours from Marin or East Bay with absolutely no traffic, 3 hours from SFO with medium traffic.

How many parking spaces are available at the venue?

--There are approximately 75 parking spaces on the property.

Can we use shuttles?

--We encourage the use of shuttles for events!

SOUND AND AMPLIFICATION

Are there sound restrictions?

--Mendocino County stipulates an amplified sound curfew of 10pm. We have very few neighbors, but need to respect their enjoyment of this rural region so we maintain a commitment to cutting off all DJ or band music at 10pm sharp. After that time, your guests can linger around the Toll House zone and

fire pit until 11pm when we ask that all offsite guests depart the land and onsite guests enter indoor spaces.

LOGISTICS, PLANNING, AND COMMUNICATION

Do you require an event planner?

--We strongly recommend that all wedding couples work with a professional planner due to the logistical complexities of hosting an event on an expansive property and the enjoyment of your wedding day. We require that you work with a planner or designate an event coordinator (friend, family, or other) to be the main contact during planning and execution of your event.

Will there be a venue representative onsite during the wedding?

--Yes

What does venue manager need from the client during planning?

--We need timelines, accommodation details, event layouts, and other specifics that are laid out in the contract.

Do I need liability insurance?

--Yes, you need to provide event insurance for the entire wedding weekend. We can recommend insurers to contact. It typically costs less than \$100.

ACTIVITIES ONSITE AND NEARBY

Is there a fire pit and are there any fire restrictions?

--We have a large fire pit in the Toll House yard and we provide seasoned firewood. Fires need to be kept at reasonable size (no bonfires!) and someone needs to ensure the fire is out at the end of the night.

Is there anywhere to swim on the property?

--Yes, we have a beautiful swimming pond, with decks and floating raft, located 1 mile uphill from the knoll. There is a forested trail that winds up to the pond.

Are there trails?

--There are about 5 miles of marked and maintained trails that wind through the open meadows as well as the oak & fir forests.

PETS

Are dogs/pets allowed on the property?

-- With prior written approval, dogs are permitted if they are integral to the Wedding or as otherwise required by law such as service dogs. No pets of any kind are allowed in any on-site accommodations unless approved by the venue. Please note that the Property is not fenced and is next to heavily wooded areas that are home to a variety of wild animals including deer, raccoons, bobcats, fox, mountain lions, etc.